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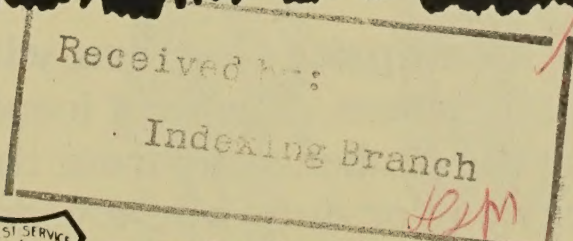
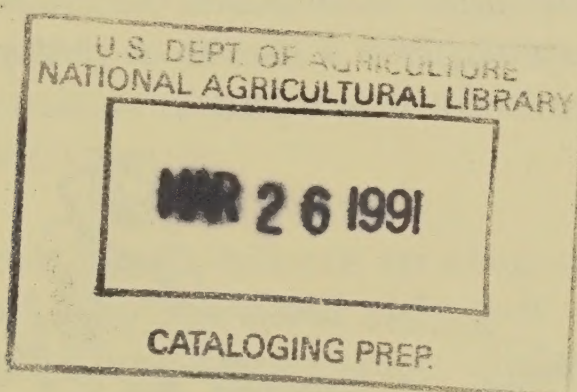
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Low Impact Horse Camping Techniques

Willamette National Forest



Pacific Northwest Region
USDA Forest Service

✓ **Plan ahead**, take only what you need plus a little extra for emergencies. Plan your menus ahead and make a checklist to work from. Include the following: A first aid kit for people and stock, a map and compass, fire tools (ax, shovel, bucket), camp gear, personal gear, supplemental stock feed, horse care equipment and food. Contact the managing Ranger District for current conditions and information.

✓ **Use lightweight equipment** such as a lightweight frying pan, tent, and nosebags. Cut down on bulk where you can; use a therm-a-rest pad instead of a foam pad.

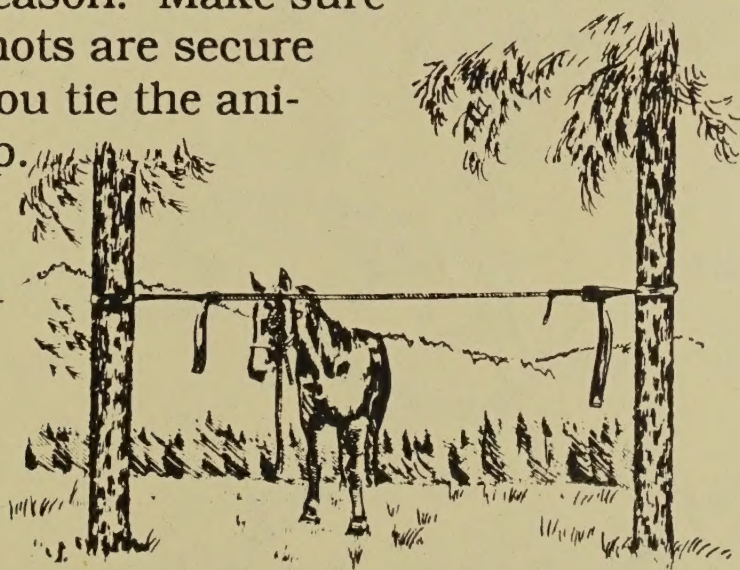


✓ **Take the minimum number of animals needed.** The less weight, the fewer animals you need which equates to less impact and work. Consider your stock, well-mannered animals cause less impact.

✓ **Pick a campsite that can withstand stock use.** The best location is back in the timber away from the trail on rocky soil or duff, where vegetation

doesn't need to be cleared. Wet, marshy areas and high alpine country are easily impacted as well as meadows where flattened grass and fire rings become obvious. You can protect the resource by camping in areas where the impact will be minimal and then day ride to your favorite locations.

✓ **We recommend tying stock up at night at least 200' from water to a hitchline tied between two trees.** Use tree saver straps to protect the tree bark. Don't tie stock in the camp area. Use hobbles on stock that paw and apply insect repellent during mosquito season. Make sure your knots are secure when you tie the animals up.



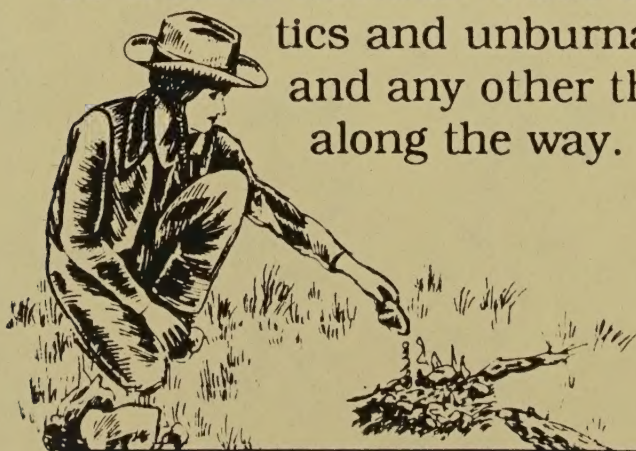
✓ **If you need to tie your horse to a tree for a brief period, use one with mature bark.** Hobble the horse if he paws and don't let him chew on the tree.

✓ **Pack supplemental feed for your stock** and feed in nosebags to prevent waste. Feed pellets instead of hay to

prevent unsightly bleached hay being left behind, and to prevent introduction of seed foreign to the area. Get stock use to this feed at home ahead of time. Help leave some feed for wildlife by not totally relying on grazing your stock.

✓ **Free roaming or hobbled stock cause less impact while grazing** than those confined by an electric fence or picketed by a foot. If confined, they should be moved often to prevent overgrazing the area. Overgrazing reduces plant vigor and reduces future grass production. Leave at least 3" of grass with a rough, tufted appearance. The area should not be grazed if it looks short and smooth, like it has been mowed. Horses will usually graze a good hour or so before wandering, so keep an eye on them or tie them up after that.

✓ **Rehabilitate your campsite before leaving**, scatter excess firewood and bury the ashes. Fill in any pawed areas, spread manure to aid decomposition, and scatter branches, rocks and debris back over the stock holding area so it looks natural. Pack out all plastics and unburnable litter and any other that you see along the way.

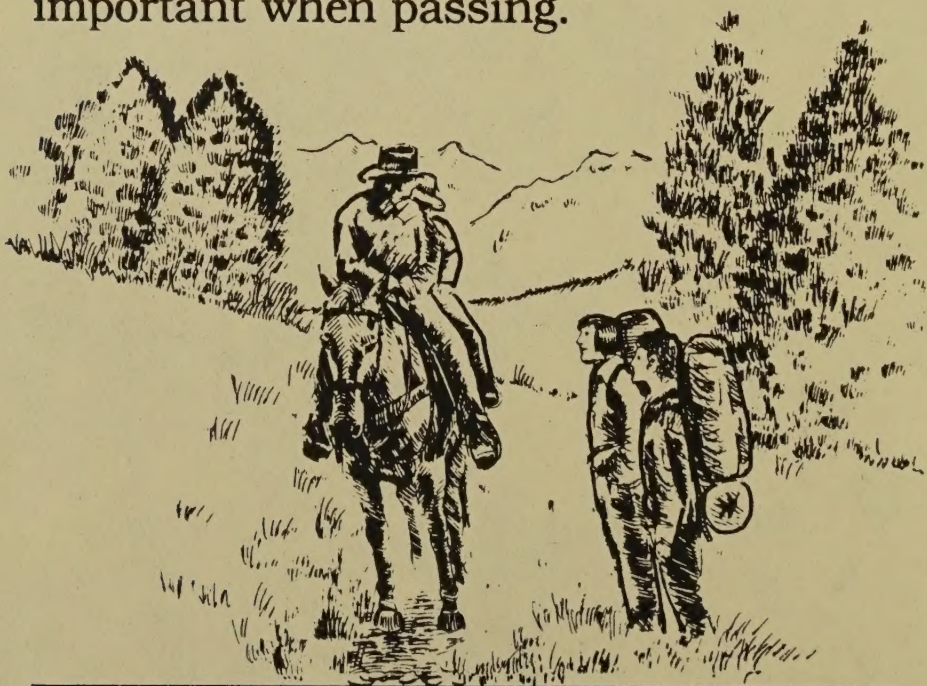


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✓ **Water quality is an issue, DO NOT-POLLUTE.** It is best to water in rocky spots in streams where you won't cause bank erosion, and not in lakes if you have a choice. Protect springs, and water 100' from them. When watering while on the trail, stop and let the stock relieve themselves before going to water.

✓ **A conflict may exist between some hikers and stock users** on the trails. The hikers' objections are with horse manure and flies, rude stock users and impact to trails and campsites. Courtesy is the key word here. Be conscientious about your stock-handling techniques.

✓ **Courteously ask hikers to step off the trail on the downhill side 6-8 feet for safety when passing.** Stock has the right-of-way on the trail because people cause less impact off the trail and it is safer and easier for them to get off. Patience and courtesy are important when passing.



✓ **Try to keep stock in single file on the trail and not cause wide, deteriorated trails.** Don't skirt puddles and minor obstacles, especially during wet conditions as more impact occurs when the ground is soft. Help remove obstacles and blowdown, or notify managers when detour trails are being formed.

✓ **When meeting other stock, whoever can get off the trail the easiest should do so.** Single animals can get off easier than pack strings, and empty pack strings are easier to maneuver than loaded ones.

✓ **It's not a good idea to run horses on the trail** for safety reasons as you might frighten other users or your horse and injure someone.

✓ **Help keep the trailheads clean** by removing your unused hay, scattering manure piles and by cleaning out your stock vehicle at home.

✓ **Help educate other stock users in low impact horse camping techniques,** this will help protect our beautiful backcountry for future generations to enjoy.

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